

Letter to the Editor,

Friday, January 30, 1987

DEL REY LAGOON TIDEGATE REPAIRS NEAR;
BUT, IS FLOOD GATE FOR DEVELOPERS OPENED ??

Once again, residents of Playa del Rey are making an urgent appeal to Councilwoman Pat Russell:

It's all happening around the waters of the Del Rey Lagoon Park.

Because of the broken and 16-months inoperative Lagoon tidegate, last Fall the Vista Del Mar Neighbors community group turned out en masse to rake and clean up the rim of the stagnant Lagoon. Through this action, residents strongly urged their Councilwoman to help them get the tidegate replaced, to increase security lighting in the park and, finally, to help acquire the long-sought "C"-shaped parcel of land at the northerly end of the Lagoon for the logical completion of the park.

We are grateful, because we understand Ms. Russell recently has conferred with Park Department officials and help is promised.

Unfortunately, ... While the Tide Gate is on the way to repair, it now appears that the "Flood Gate" has been opened to developers in the area who seek to violate the Del Rey Lagoon Specific Plan.

The new threat around Del Rey Lagoon now concerns HEIGHT of construction and potential VACATION of streets and other public lands exclusively to aid condominium developers to build more units, increasing residential density and reducing sorely-lacking public parking in the beach/recreation area.

On Tuesday, January 27, the BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, capitulated to one of these developers -- over-riding the 37 ft. MAXIMUM height limit clearly stated in the Del Rey Lagoon Specific Plan, over-riding the 37 ft. height recommendation of the Deputy Advisory Agency, AND, over-riding the 37 ft. recommendation of Pat Russell's own council aide!!

The very essence of the Del Rey Lagoon Specific Plan -- hammered out more than 5 years ago by a Citizen's Advisory Committee and the City Planning Department to comply with the Coastal Act to develop a Local Coastal Plan was:

"Residential development shall be regulated to control further increases in height and density in order to be compatible with the small scale character of the existing community...."

The developer not only seeks to build HIGHER than 95 percent of all other structures in the Lagoon area, but also has asked for the City to give them 62nd street to increase the developer's lot size and enable him to build more condos! The City's "vacation" of 62nd Ave. would remove at least four public parking spaces -- another distinct violation of the Specific Plan.

We counted on the Zoning Board to uphold the Del Rey Specific Plan; it failed us... We fear the Zoning Board now has opened the flood gate for other developers who will seek the same concessions --- which would further congest the unique Del Rey Lagoon area. This must be STOPPED !!!

Fortunately, we are appealing these critical precedent-setting issues to the City Council's Planning and Environment Committee -- whose Chairperson is Pat Russell.

Please, Ms. Russell, uphold Del Rey Lagoon's Specific Plan. Now, more than ever, Playa del Rey really needs your help!!!

Robert A. Krauch,
Member Citizen's Advisory Committee
Vista del Mar Neighbors
Playa del Rey NETWORK